



What keeps you up at night?

Teenagers have the highest crash risk of any age group.

That one fact is enough to worry any parent of a new teen driver. But there are more:

- ▲ Teens are involved in 3 times as many fatal crashes as all other drivers, based on miles driven\*
- ▲ New, inexperienced drivers, aged 16, are more often involved in crashes due to driver error and where excessive speed was a factor\*
- ▲ Fatal crashes involving 16-year-olds are more likely to occur when other teens are in the car\*
- ▲ Most teens who are killed in crashes are not using their safety belts \*\*

**Be a safe driver. Raise a safe driver.  
Use these 8 tips to reduce the risk.**

\*National Highway Traffic Safety Administration research

\*\* Pergamon/National Safety Council study; *Journal of Safety Research*

## Maine's Graduated License System\*

**A person under 18 years of age who has been issued a driver's license is prohibited from:**

- X** Operating a motor vehicle between the hours of 12 AM and 5 AM
- X** Carrying passengers other than immediate family members unless accompanied by a licensed operator who has held a valid driver's license for the past 2 years, is at least 20 years of age, is occupying a seat beside the driver and is licensed to operate the class of vehicle being operated by the licensee. Immediate family member means grandparent, step-grandparent, parent, step-parent, spouse, child, step-children, brother, sister, step-brother or step-sister
- X** Operating a motor vehicle while using a hand-held device (including cell phone)

**These restrictions are in effect for a period of 180 days from passing the road test. Violation of the conditions of these restrictions will result in a 180-day extension of the restrictions noted above which may extend beyond the 18th birthday.**

For everyone's safety, new drivers must operate under special rules when they get their first license. The first license issued to a new applicant under 21 years of age is provisional for a period of 2 years and 1 year for persons at least 21 years of age. If the driver violates traffic laws during the provisional period, his or her license will be suspended:

- **For 30 days on first offense**
- **For 60 days on second offense**
- **For 90 days on third offense**
- **Longer suspensions are possible depending on the particular violation.**

\*as of June 2008

*This important safety information is presented to the parents of new teen drivers in Maine through a partnership of:*

**MaineDOT  
Maine Bureau of Highway Safety  
Maine Turnpike Authority  
Maine Secretary of State**

# Keeping Your Teen Driver Safe

## 8 Tips for Maine Parents



## 1 Use Driver's Ed—and More.

Driver's Education is a great way to learn skills and is an important part of introducing young people to the rules and responsibilities of driving. Parents should take additional steps beyond Driver's Ed to produce safer drivers. Besides setting a good example, parents should talk to their teens about driving safely. Remember, poor skills aren't always to blame in teen crashes, teen attitudes and decision making play a part. Teens often think they're immune to harm, so they don't use safety belts as much and they deliberately seek thrills like speeding. Formal training and education alone don't change these tendencies. Parents have much more influence than they think, so insist that your teen buckle up and drive safely.



## 2 Know the law.

Become familiar with restrictions on beginning drivers. Enforce the rules. To learn about the law in Maine, go to [themtsc.org](http://themtsc.org)

## 3 Restrict passengers.

Teen passengers in a vehicle can distract a beginning driver and/or lead to greater risktaking. Because young drivers often transport their friends, there's a teen passenger problem as well as a teen driver problem. About 6 of every 10 teenage passenger deaths (59%) during 2003 occurred in crashes with a teen driver. While night driving with passengers is particularly lethal, many fatal crashes with teen passengers occur during the day. The best policy is to restrict teenage passengers, especially multiple teens, all the time.



## 4 Restrict night driving.

Crash data shows that teen drivers are at greatest risk when driving at night. During these hours teen drivers are easily distracted or prone to take risks. Maine law prohibits drivers under age 18 from operating a vehicle between midnight and 5 AM. Maine's late night driving restrictions work—since the 12 AM to 5 AM restriction on drivers under 18 has been in place, teen driver-related fatalities in Maine during those hours have decreased.



## 5 Supervise practice driving.

Take an active role in helping your teenager learn how to drive. Plan a series of practice sessions in a wide variety of situations, including night driving. Give beginners time to work up to challenges like driving in heavy traffic, on wintry roads or on the Interstate. Supervised



practice should be spread over at least six months and continue even after a teenager graduates from a learner's permit to a restricted or full license.

**Remember that you're a role model.** New drivers learn a lot by example, so practice safe driving. Teens with crashes and violations often have parents with poor driving records.

## 6 Require safety belt use.

Don't assume that belt use when you're in the car with your 16-year-old means belts will be used all the time, especially when your child is out with peers. Remember that belt use is lower among teenagers than older people. Insist on belts all the time—it's the law.



## 7 Prohibit drinking.

Make it clear that it's not only illegal for anyone under 21 to drink alcohol in Maine, but it is highly dangerous to drink and drive. That's why Maine has tough laws including a zero-tolerance policy for minors.



## 8 Choose vehicles for safety, not image.

Teenagers should drive vehicles that reduce their chances of a crash and offer protection in case they do crash. For example, small cars don't offer the best protection in a crash. Avoid cars with performance images that might encourage speeding. Avoid trucks and sport utility vehicles—the smaller ones, especially, are more prone to roll over.

